

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION
Education Committee Meeting**

**LOCATION
Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference**

**Meeting Date
September 3, 2009**

Attendees:

Kris Johnston, Chair
Anna Attla
Julie Broyles
Taylor Gregg
Debbie Kitelinger

Community Members/Guests:

Geri Benshoof
David Kvasager
Janean Butler
Kay Holmes
Barbara Murray
Christie Reinhardt
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus
Belinda Burns
Nancy Nagarkar

Staff:

Teresa Holt

Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo
Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 2:00 p.m.
ROLL CALL

Approve the Agenda and Previous Meeting Minutes

There was not a quorum and the agenda and previous meeting minutes could not be approved.

Correspondence

Education/Special Education Services in DOC – Karen Jenkins

Teresa Holt stated that Karen Jenkins wanted to discuss with the Education Committee the issue of special education students in corrections that she is having a difficult time getting services to. She is having difficulty getting teachers to come out and work with a student at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center. Unlike some other facilities, they don't provide teachers at this site. Teresa stated that she mentioned that they might bring this up through the SEAP for the Anchorage School District. Karen Jenkins has set up a meeting with Carol Comeau and if nothing comes of that meeting or through the SEAP, then perhaps the Education Committee could look into doing something.

Other Correspondence

Teresa Holt stated that they gathered all the comments on the indicators that they reviewed last year and gave those letters to Sharon (Schumacher) Fishel and Art Arnold.

Teresa stated that she received a letter for Jerry Sjolander regarding the Alaska State School for the Deaf. She stated that recently the Anchorage School District met with the State Department of Education and came to an agreement that they will run the State School for the Deaf for this year and the Department of Education will pay for the transportation of the students from Mat-Su to Anchorage. Geri Benshoof added that they are having a board meeting next week and what is on their agenda is to pass regulations that the sending districts would have to pay for the transportation, not the receiving district.

Teresa Holt stated that she has been asked to go and talk to the OT/PT

licensing board. They recently attended the State Board of Education meeting and they stated that they were concerned about people who are not licensed to practice OT and PT and this would include people providing those services in schools. It would require them to repeal a regulation that allowed school district staff to do that and not be prosecuted. They have asked Teresa to present to them on September 14th and give them an idea of how OT and PT is provided in the schools and how the schools get funded to do that. Her goal is to go to the meeting and explain to them how special education funding works, talk about Medicaid, and to finish off talking about how difficult it is to get services in rural areas and tell them about the telepractice project that the rural ad hoc committee is working on.

Christie Reinhart added that even in Anchorage, the OTs and PTs oversee five to seven schools and oftentimes work using a consult or collaborative model where teachers and aides assist in providing services. The idea is to have a team approach in this collaborative model where everybody is taking the recommendations from the OT or PT about how to keep that child successful and engaged in school.

OSEP Monitoring Visit

Kris Johnston stated that she and Teresa Holt attended the OSEP Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. She stated that OSEP is coming in October to review Part B and Part C. She directed everyone to the list of questions that were e-mailed and stated that they will go through the first six questions and get feedback from the committee.

Teresa Holt started with question 2: How does the SAP advise the SEA of the unmet needs in the state in the education of children with disabilities? The following responses were given:

- ☒ Review the indicators and give feedback on the activities they are going to do as per the indicators
- ☒ Attend stakeholder meetings
- ☒ Attend the superintendents' and the directors' meetings and the ASSEC Conference
- ☒ Survey stakeholders to identify the biggest needs and prioritize them on the work plan
- ☒ Forward problems that are brought before them to the Department

- of Education
- ☒ Address related services and problems
- ☒ Task for looking at the shortages of therapists and special education teachers and creating plans related to that.

Question 3: How do you comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities? The following responses were given:

- ☒ Speak at the Board of Education meetings
- ☒ Speak to the Department of Health and Social Services
- ☒ Address the legislature
- ☒ State Board of Education member is a part of the Education Committee and the Council.

Question 4: How do you advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Department of Education?

- ☒ Review the APR
- ☒ Review the indicators
- ☒ Review the due process hearings
- ☒ The Education Committee has been part of the CIMP
- ☒ The Education Committee participates in the leadership conference.

Question 5: What is your involvement in advising the SEA in developing and implementing policies and procedures relating to the coordination and provision of services for children with disabilities?

- ☒ Review the indicators
- ☒ Review the SPED handbook
- ☒ Talk with Art Arnold directly regarding specific policies
- ☒ Stakeholder surveys
- ☒ Restraint and seclusion group
- ☒ Rural Ad Hoc Committee which overlaps with the Education Committee.

Question 6: What is your involvement in the preparation and submission of the annual report to the Governor and the Annual Performance Report on the status of special education programs operated by the State?

- ☒ The Education Committee is a participant in the indicators and gives input related to them.

Anna Attla volunteered to present for the Education Committee at the October Council meeting and Teresa Holt will contact Julie Broyles and see if she would be interested in co-presenting with Anna.

Department of Education and Early Development

Response to Intervention

Teresa Holt stated that she spoke with Don Enoch and they had pulled together a group for Response to Intervention and had Alan Coulter come for the last two days and talk about the practicality of doing that and how it fits with special education. She reported that the guidance document for the Response to Intervention from the department is available online for districts.

NIMAS/NIMAC Update

Teresa Holt stated that they are currently revising the State Special Education Handbook to reflect the fact that districts need to provide these accessible formats for students and that it needs to be in provided in the same timeline as other students get their textbook material. SESA has been contracted to provide this service and they will be charging a fee to the districts for this service. Nancy Nagarkar explained that this fee will allow them to maintain the program and continue to do it.

Restraint and Seclusion Policies – request by Secretary Arne Duncan

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan sent a letter to each state asking them to gather information on their policies, regulations and guidance that they have in their state regarding the use of restraint and seclusion. Don Enoch is the person in Alaska who is gathering that information. Teresa Holt stated that according to Don, there are three statutes and two regulations that talk about any type of restraint or seclusion and they are very vague. She stated that Alaska is currently one of 23 states that have no restrictions concerning restraint and seclusion of public school students. Teresa Holt added that even though it's not on their priority list, the Council should probably add this to their

workplan to help guide this policy revision. Kris Johnston reminded everyone of Eric Gebhart's idea to add a section to the online statewide data collection system that deals with suspensions and expulsions.

Set Meeting Dates and Times for 2009 – 2010

The following dates were set for the 2:00 p.m. Education Committee meetings for 2009 – 2010 as follows:

October 1, 2009
November 12, 2009
December 3rd
January 14, 2010
February 11, 2010
March 11, 2010
April 8, 2010
May 13, 2010
June 17, 2010

The group discussed their face-to-face meeting in Kodiak and Teresa Holt will send out a Doodle to everyone so they can check which dates people will be available during the last week of October and the first week of November.

Trust Update

Teresa Holt stated that there were several recommendations made to the Trust and they will be making a decision next week. Pertaining specifically to the Education Committee is a \$100,000 for SESA, \$100,000 for the Alaska Transition Training Initiative and \$50,000 for rural transition. The other recommendations were: \$350,000 for DD community grants, \$500,000 for crisis response team, \$100,000 AARC, disability program navigator for \$150,000.

The Trust decides which projects will be funded, presents the information to the Governor, and the Governor can choose to put that in his budget or not. In January they advocate and educate about keeping the money in the budget.

Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings

Teresa Holt stated that they are going to get to take an extra person to the ACRES conference March 24th – 27th in Memphis. If people are interested in attending, they should let Teresa know.

The Special Education Directors' Conference is coming up September 23rd – 25th in Anchorage and if people are interested in attending, they should let Teresa know as soon as possible.

Report on SESA Board Meeting

Nancy Nagarkar stated that they have had six new hires and are fully staffed. They will be opening up a small office focused on the Alaska Autism Resource Center in Fairbanks and they are hoping for an open house in October.

People gave reports and the new hires gave an update to everyone about who they are and where they came from.

Nancy stated that they've been to the Bristol Bay Native Association and to Kawerak working with the tribes on positive behavioral supports in the Head Start area. They've gotten several more tribes really interested in signing up for next year and one of them will hopefully be Tanana Chiefs in Fairbanks.

Report from the State Board of Education Meeting

Geri Benshoof stated that they are meeting in Galena and one of the things up for vote will be the criteria and definitions change from mental retardation to cognitively impaired. She stated that they will also have something coming out about the State School for the Deaf relating to the sending district being responsible for paying for transportation to the Anchorage School District.

Teresa Holt added that the Council sent official comments regarding removing the terminology mentally retarded from the regulations as well as the comments they received regarding the State School for the Deaf. Kris Johnston added that she has asked the staff of SESA to go through their policies and procedures and change the language in there as well.

Report on OSEP Leadership Conference

Teresa Holt stated that at the OSEP Leadership Conference, the repeated theme they heard is that data collection is very important, and that if data is gathered, it must be used otherwise it's just time wasted. She attended sessions on the National Longitudinal Transition Study, IDEA not being reauthorized this year, and a drop-out prevention group. Kris Johnston attended a session in which someone asked how to get stakeholders to provide input and noted how the lines of communication seem to be less complicated in Alaska.

Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 1, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.